I am a supporter of BeOS, an operating system that has recently -- more or
less -- died with the sale of its parent company, Be, Inc. to Palm. I have
noticed that many BeOS users are lobbying to extract gains from Microsoft or to
increase punitive damages. However, unlike other BeOS supporters I do NOT
support the anti-trust case against Microsoft and hope that the Department of
Justice does not seek to come up with new penalties or excessive penalties
against Microsoft as it would be counter-productive.

The truth about BeOS is that it failed due to poor management. Originally,
BeOS was provided for a PARTICULAR COMPUTER SYSTEM --- just like the Macintosh
Operating system is provided for a particular computer system. Originally, BeOS
was NOT DESIGNED to work on multi-boot systems. That is, BeOS was designed for
computers that COULD NOT run MS-Windows just like the Macintosh Operating system
is on computer systems that can not run MS-Windows.

The Be product was designed to compete for media developers who were
currently using the Macintosh -- so, originally Be's competition was the
Macintosh. In fact, Be, Inc., at one time had hoped that Apple would purchase Be
-- instead Apple purchased NeXT and based their future operating system on
NeXT's technology rather than Be's technology.

When Be failed to make headway with its own proprietary computer system;
and when Be failed to win against NeXT; Be, Inc. then decided to compete in the
general operating system market --- against Linux, FreeBSD and Microsoft -- all
systems that run on low-cost Intel hardware. Be CHANGED their operating system
to run on these new Intel systems. There was very little software for BeOS
compared to Windows and Linux --- that's why BeOS failed.

Unlike Linux which gained headway and had tens of thousands of
developers; the constant failures of Be turned-off developers and little
software was every produced for BeOS systems. Microsoft's tactics had little to
do with the failure of BeOS. BeOS was competing in the same market as the
Macintosh originally (proprietary non-Intel systems) and failed; then BeOS went
for the low-cost Intel market and failed; and then Be, Inc. once again tried a
new strategy of forgetting about the desktop and concentrating on devices with

their BeIA --- then they ran out of money and sold themselves. Be had more ideas than money in the bank to support their goals.

The history of Be is one of poor management. Be did not take the time to slowly build market share. Be, Inc. could NOT even erode Apple's market share when it competed against Apple. To think they had a good chance in the even more competitive Intel market is a laugh --- Be was selling a proprietary closed operating system with little software --- and virtually ZERO marketing. That combination against Linux (free with LOTS of publicity) and Windows (costly but with LOTS of software) was doomed to initial failure --- however, if Be had the money they might have carved out a niche --- they didn't have the money and thus no time to build a niche. That's not Microsoft's fault.

Please end the whole Microsoft affair quickly and please don't allow people to put their failures at MS's doorstep. The story of Be has to do with poor management. Be lasted 10 years trying to be the next APPLE --- only in the last few years did they compete in the Microsoft realm -- their failure has nothing to do with Microsoft.

Sincerely,

--- Keith Frederick,

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